AIM

THE BULLETIN OF THE AMERICAN INDEPENDENT MOVEMENT

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KEEP OUT URBAN REMOVAL

HELP PRESS FOR LOWER FOOD PRICES

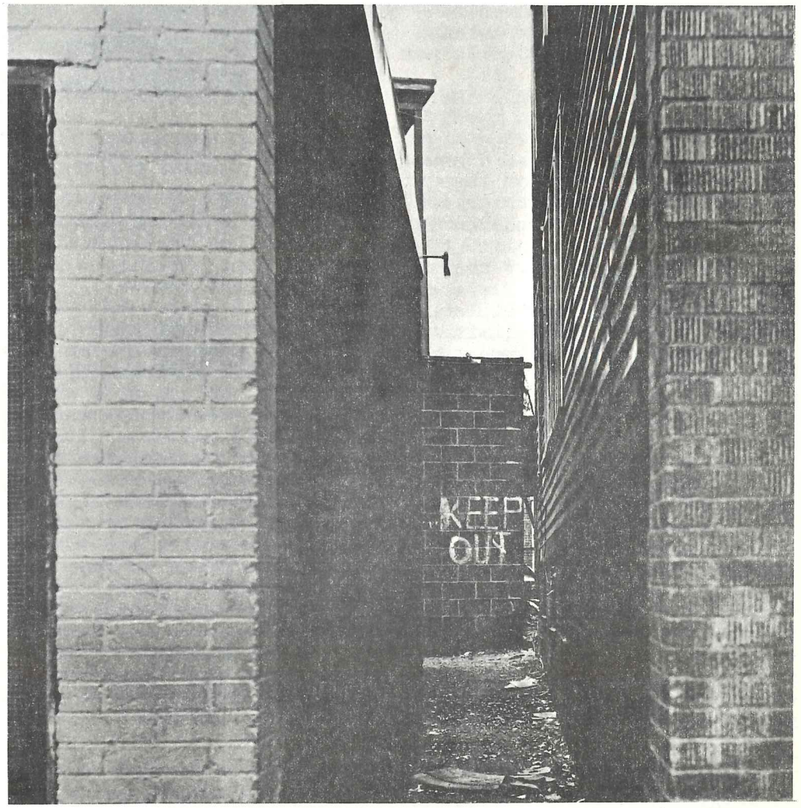
Pickets may soon be appearing at local supermarkets in New Haven. A group of housewives met December 19 to make a plan for direct action to reduce food prices in New Haven. They call themselves Housewives Enlist for Lower Prices, or HIELP.

The group began by going to the New Haven Chamber of Commerce President and Executive Director, to get their help in talking with grocers, but they refused to get involved. Then they talked with the director of the Connecticut Food Stores Association. That organization also refused to talke with merchants about food prices. Mrs. Phyllis Ryan of HIELP says, "We have made serious and genuine attempts at negotiations. Our efforts have not been taken seriously. The group feels that only direct action will convince the supermarkets that we mean business."

Those who wish to support HIELP's efforts may join the growing ranks by purchasing and wearing HIELP buttons, which are available from the following HIELP members:

Mrs. Phyllis Ryan, 387-2804
Mrs. Barbara Nevins, 776-1050
Mrs. Isabel Russell, 777-0510
Mrs. Clyda Dublin, 562-8141

SPECIAL ON AIM PROJECTS--P.6



This is where the people of the Legion Avenue and Scranton Street area now live. If the city is going to renew the neighborhood, they have two alternatives...

AIM workers are currently opposing several new attempts by the city to tear down neighborhoods with "urban removal." In the Legion Avenue area leafletting and existing neighborhood groups are being used to draw the battle lines against the extension of Route 34 (the Oak Street connector), which is the asphalt grave planned for this neighborhood.

(Once again the city is planning by highways, not by people.) In addition, work is continuing on the Hill against planned neighborhood destruction there.

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AIM

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IPAC
241 Orange Street
New Haven, 06510.
For information write or call 787-0123.

keep out urban removal cont.

In the Scranton Street area, Mike Avery has enlisted the aid of two neighborhood women to destribute leaflets explaining and criticizing the 70 mile per hour extension of the Oak Street connector. One leaflet pleads that:

"New Haven doesn't need a new road to get people from the suburbs to downtown--there are plenty of roads. New Haven is going to turn into a place that has no people, but only roads and parking garages...The speed limit on the new road will be 70 mph. But the speed limit on the two highways it connects is only 45 mph! They are making the speed limit so high on this road so that they have to put an 80 foot grass strip in the middle and wide grassy slopes on the sides. It will be 100 feet wider than the present Oak Street connector. Why so wide? To tear down every house in our neighborhood.

"To build this road, they have to rip up 45 acres of land, tear down over 250 buildings, move over 1000 people and spend millions of dollars. What do we get for that? Nothing...

"We have the right to help decide what happens to our neighborhood. We don't believe the best way to solve our problems is to destroy our homes. Let's get together and stop the highway and force the city to use the money for us instead of against us."

Seeing that homeowners are eager to sell out at a profit, this group has been talking to tenants instead. Their first goal is to inform them about what is coming, and then to get more residents interested in working against it. Neighborhood people have met already with people on the Hill who have had some experience in opposing urban renewal.

A rehabilitated neighborhood like this on on Court Street could be planned for the Scranton Street area. It is still not too late.

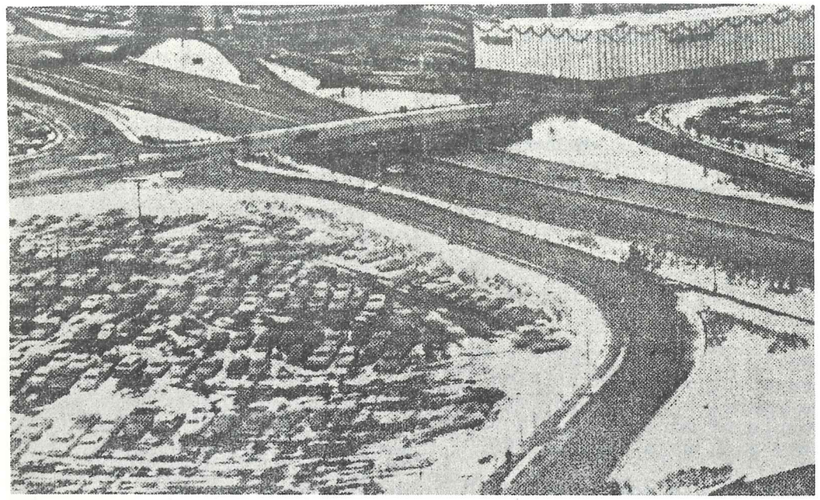
The Rev. James Smith has been talking to members of the Legion Avenue Businessmen's Association to set up a meeting with businessmen threatened by the Route 34 project. Instead of removing 300 families and creating another ghetto, Smith would rather see work done in the area. Cleaning up the Legion Avenue area and making it a decent place to live are parts of Smith's proposals. The city should re-habilitate the neighborhood, not destroy it. He and Dan Crofts plan direct action to bring the neighborhood's plight to public attention.

Smith's group is also circulating a petition in the neighborhood protesting the actions of the 22nd ward's absentee alderman. Alderman Noah C. Perry has been working in Vermont as an accountant for several months. While in New Haven last year, Perry attended very few meetings of the Board. The people of the area are "taxpayers without representation," says Smith, deserted by their elected representative at a time when they most need some one to speak out for them against the city's power to destroy. The petition will be sent to Mayor Lee and the newspapers.

Protesting that many Hill residents have been moved three or more times by such projects, the statement warns that if "the Hill is renewed we'll have to move to another city, because there won't be any place left in New Haven for us to live or shop or call our own."

Fred Harris and Willie Counsel of the Hill Parents Association have been working to organize popular opposition to renewal since September. Their leaflet, distributed during the joint HPA and AIM picketing of the November conference for redevelopment officials at the Park Plaza Hotel, draws a parallel between the past Oak Street project and present plans:

"The Oak Street neighborhood was totally destroyed. All the houses and stores were torn down, and hundreds of poor people were moved to other poor neighborhoods. Now these neighborhoods are being renewed. Although the Redevelopment Agency calls it 'rehabilitation" with "citizen participation," it's the same as Oak Street--housing for poor people is being torn down and housing we can't afford is being built. All the small stores, clubs, and churches are disappearing because there's no room for them in the expensive new buildings."



A concrete graveyard like this is now being planned by the city for the Scranton Street area. Guess where the people will live.

The leaflet restates a theme of the Cook and Harris campaigns ("We demand that neighborhoods and cities be planned by the people--not by bureaucrats and politicians.") and warns that:

"It's time the Redevelopment Agency started listening to us. We don't want to leave the Hill. We like it here. We need houses, not parking lots. We need good low-income housing, not moderate-income housing. We want to live on a real street with houses and stores--not in a project or a skyscraper. We need a small playground on every block--not a huge park."

There are other projects taking shape. Besides protesting the existing renewal programs, priorities, and decision-making process, AIM will be offering alternatives. A low income housing scheme to be built by people in the Hill is now being worked on by architects Harris Stone and Bob Nevins with the Hill Parents Association. A plan which would tie this housing into a larger community run development program is also in the works.

ANOTHER EAST ROCK?

By Dan Crofts

Several years ago, a group of irate New Haven citizens organized to combat a proposed expressway that would have slashed through the park and the residential area at the foot of East Rock. Today, the East Rock area remains intact. The concrete slabs that were to have led from Route 91 into the new expressway end abruptly in the middle of a vacant lot. This striking victory of a community organization, the Save the Park Committee, is particularly relevant today, because the state and local roadplanners, temporarily frustrated in one location, are now planning to force expressways through two other areas in New Haven.

The first of these roads would be a multi-land extension of the Oak Street connector, to be known as Route 34. Its projected course would cut a swathe over 400 feet wide through the Legion Avenue area.

The Redevelopment authority estimates that 322 families and 157 individuals -- more than 1000 people overall -- would be displaced by Route 34. These people would not be the only ones to suffer, for once across Bouelvard Avenue, the road would cut West Shore Park in half.

However, one should not jump to the conclusion that it will be easy, or even possible, to organize the residents of Legion Avenue in the same fashion as the Save the Park Committee. For eleven years, the Oak Street connector has literally been aimed at the Legion Avenue community, so that many people there have become accustomed to the thought of its destruction and have let the community disintegrate. Indeed, various landlords and businessmen anticipate a profitable compensation for their properties if Route 34 is built.

Opposition to Route 34 will be an uphill battle. The people in the area must be willing to fight for their homes and businesses. Unfortunately, plans for 34 are now more complete than those for the East Rock Expressway ever were; acquisition of buildings has begun and some money has been appropriated. Furthermore, few people seem concerned to save West Shore Park; East Rock Park, by contrast, adjoins one of the wealthiest sections of New Haven, where many people, aesthetics aside, fought the expressway to preserve the value of their property.

The roadbuilders are especially vulnerable in their other current project, the "circumferential loop" which would circle Yale with an expressway connecting the Route 91 exit of Trumbull Street and the proposed extension of 34. Such a road would cut through the Yale campus, but Mayor Lee has sweetened the bitter pill by proposing that the future expressway would run underground in the Trumbull Street area where Yale would be most affected. President Brewster of Yale has accepted this compromise.

Once past Yale, the "loop"would rise to ground level behind the cemetery where dozens of poor families were evicted a few years ago by the bulldozers of the Redevelopment Authority. Parts of Lake Place and Bristol Street, in the lower Dixwell area, would next be flattened by the "loop", which would then

Cont.--Page >

THE HO LINE

The President's office. He is on the phone, as usual.

"Hello! Hello!" (to himself) "Dammed Hot Line's not worth a plugged nickel sometimes. Hello!"

Voice on the other end of the line answers. "Hello, who's calling?"

"This ain't no party line; who d'ya think?"

"Oh, it's you, hang on. I'll get him" (Pause) A new voice comes over the phone. "Hello."

"Hello, Ho. Say, listen, how'd you like to extend the truce?"

"What truce? Oh the New Year's truce. Sorry; we've already said that it's just a cover-up for your imperialistic war preparations."

"Well, what about Tet? Wanta go for a couple of months without fighting after that?"

"Lyndon, you know I can't answer for the Cong."

"I know. But what difference does that make? Look, I'll suspend bombing in the North, if you'll suspend your supply operations."

"Lyndon, have you got a problem you're not telling me about? C'mon, level."

"Well, I figure I can cut my budget by about $5 billion if we cancel hostilities for a couple of months. You'd probably pick up a savings too."

"I could use some ready cash. We're getting kinda strapped."

"What d'ya say?"

"I don't know."

"It's not like I'm asking for the whole thing to stop. We can pick it up two months from now right where we left off."

"What about last year when I asked you the same thing? You said it was out of the question. Why should I agree now?"

"I told you that was an election year. You can't win elections with appeasement."

"You can't win 'em your way either, it would seem. Look, let me think it over. I'll give you a call back."

"Okay. But Ho, make it quick. It's not that I want to influence your decision, but I've gotta approve the plans for the destruction of Haiphong tonight, and, well, you know how the Pentagon is... if I turn them down, they'll want a good reason."

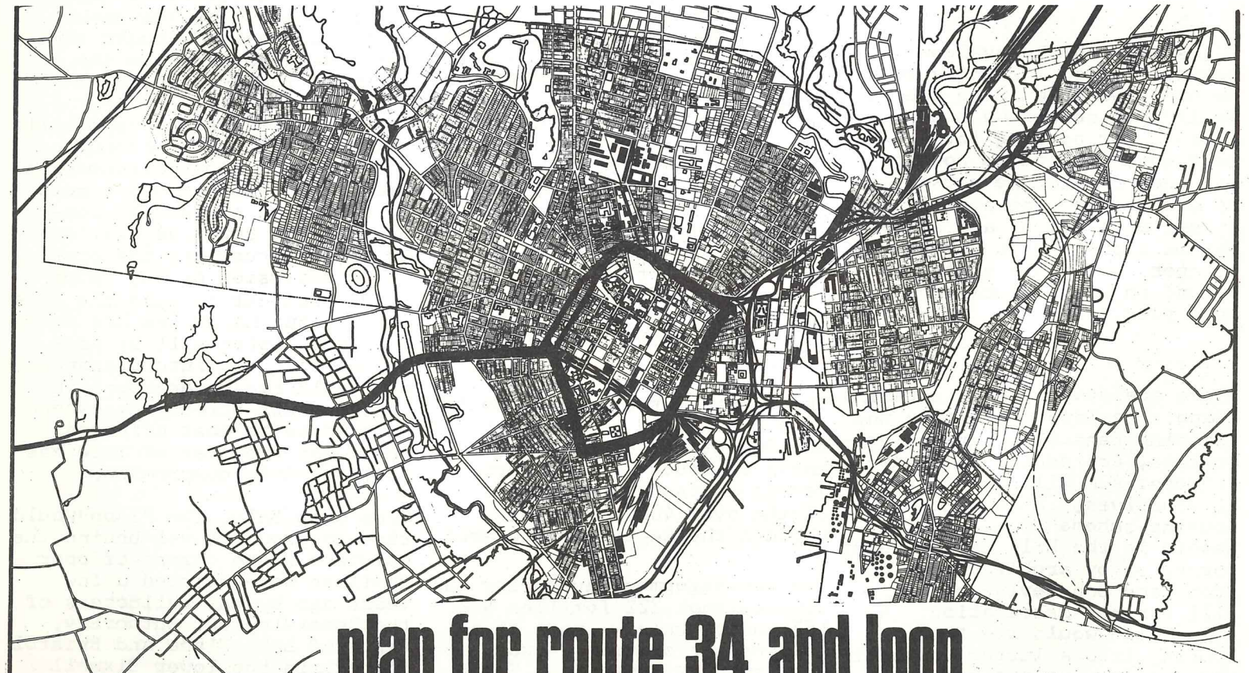
"Lyndon?"

"Yeah."

"Goodbye, Lyndon."

Hanging up. "I wonder what made him so touchy. I wish I could figure out Orientals.

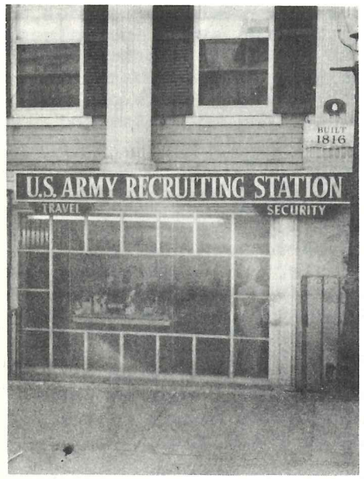
by Dick Tino



plan for route 34 and loop

NEW HAVEN CONNECTICUT

WE WON'T GO!



By Morty Miller

On December 4, 500 people met in Chicago to discuss draft resistance at a conference set up by 32 Chicago men who have publicly announced their refusal to fight in Vietnam.

The conference is remarkable because it indicates the distance we have traveled in little over a year--and perhaps indicates the crest of student dissatisfaction with this most clearly unpopular of America's recent wars.

A year ago the discussion of the war in Vietnam was only beginning to include the draft. Class ranking, student deferments, and the morality of the Conscientious Objector position represented the limits of debate. The shift in the terms of debate were noted in the Dec. 30 New York Times "Quotation of the Day" taken from a letter to President Johnson from 100 "student leaders." Noting a conflict between the observations of young people about the war and administration statements about it, the article stated, "Unless this conflict can be eased, the United States will find some of her most loyal and courageous young people choosing to go to jail rather than to bear their country's arms."

"This conference is about those who would not, and will not go" Tom Gushurst, one of the 32, said in opening the conference." He noted that the conference would proceed on the assumption that those who will not go are completely justified, and that the discussions would be of greatest concern to the young men who are tired of hearing President Johnson say, 'Forgive them for they know not what they do.'

The speakers who followed discussed their own struggles in resistance, the authority of the individual conscience that prevents participation in American war crimes, the legality of conscription, and historical precedents of resistance such as the French resistance to the Algerian war.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CONFERENCE

The significance of the WE WON'T GO conference is highlighted by contrasting it with the University of Chicago conference which opened simultaneously across the street. This was a 4 day gathering financed by $20,000 in Ford Foundation funds at which 125 experts, including a few selected students, discussed the draft behind closed doors. In contrast, the WE WON'T GO conference was set up by young men who had taken stands against the draft and the war. It attracted distinguished participants from "the movement" and an audience of 500.

The persons who came to the WE WON'T GO conference were struggling with the problem we all face: in the midst of an atrocious war in Vietnam, a foreign policy which seems inclined to continue to get involved in other Vietnams, and in the face of a corrupt culture, we are only men. There's a tension between what we are and what we must do.

The question of what part individual action of men plays in this problem was dealt with by David Dellinger in writing of the refusal of three men stationed at Fort Hood to go to Vietnam. He said, "The power of their action lies in the possibility that others will take a similar stand.... There can be no beginning without such acts, but they must come to fruition in widespread, politically effective actions by 'ordinary' people." (Liberation magazine, Aug.1966)

The WE WON'T GO conference signifies an important change from isolated acts to solidarity. "...from a position of 'I won't go' they are moving to the solidarity of "We Won't Go'." (New Left Notes, Dec. 9,1966)

These 32 men in Chicago (like the group in New Haven) are acting in solidarity with the Fort Hood Three. The character of the individual risks takes by each of them is changed by the fact of their standing together. This makes their action particularly noteworthy. This makes their action a part of the development of our resistance.

What I mean is this: we mean something very deep when we say that these 32 men acted together, in solidarity--a meaning which everything in our society has made us unable to see, or has taught us to be blind to, or at least has taught us to mistrust as shimmering illusion.These men are friends, they have shared their deepest thoughts and feelings, they have learned from each other. The fact that they have found others who share both their analysis and a sense of the resistance they must put up has helped them overcome their isolation, their sense of guilt. They have gained an ability to act from being together. It is not a comment anyone should be ashamed of, or that should raise questions about these individuals' abilities to act alone--to say they couldn't have acted without their brothers. This is, in fact, a tribute to them, and, more importantly, it is only true. These men are not a fortuitous aggregation of isolated atoms simple brought together for an end, around an issue; their union is an expression of solidarity.

Further, their community is the essence of their political importance. Under the threat of five years in jail, under the perhaps more formidable threat of isolation, 32 men in Chicago have carved out a form of resistance--they have increased by one (or maybe by one thousand) the ways men in a corrupt society can begin to realize their humanity together. How much they have accomplished depends on us.

UNDER AIM'S UMBRELLA: MANY PROJECTS

The Coordinating Committee of AIM now represents over a dozen ongoing projects and affiliated organizations, laying the groundwork for political action in the Third District. At the recent committee meeting on January 8 there was not enough time to discuss all ongoing activities. Vietnam action, opposition to the Oak Street connector extension, procurement of a printing press, and planning for a major fund-raising concert required all the time available. The following reports summarize the projects that have already begun, although other projects and affiliated organizations may soon be formed.

Conn. Voters' Council

The CVC seeks to organize and unite Negro political power statewide. The CVC was begun by AIM members and the organization's first political act was the endorsement of Bob Cook. CVC's purpose is to build a strong political force through racial unity. We plan to organize black political strength throughout the state. The CVC's headquarters is in New Haven and branches are now being developed in Stratford, Bridgeport and Hartford.

The immediate concern of the CVC is to sponsor a statewide voter registration drive. Negotiations are under way to bring Dr. Martin Luther King to Connecticut. It is hoped that King's presence will spark the drive and publicize CVC's belief in the need for organized political strength. CVC will be an active lobby power when the state legislature meets. We will push for open primaries, elimination of the party lever on the voting machine and an end to capital punishment.

Our two most important interests are: 1) the State Welfare system -- we believe welfare payments should be increased and more poor people should be employed by the Welfare Department; and 2) a guaranteed annual income. CVC believes that the salvation of the poor doesn't depend upon the Democratic and Republican parties, but on independent political organization.

-- Jim Smith

(Note: An article on CVC appeared on the front page of the Sunday Register, January 8.)

HPA

HPA, which led the fight for changes at the Prince Street School and ran Fred Harris for State Assembly, is organizing several new projects concerned with housing, school conditions and welfare conditions, but these projects have not yet been announced to the general public. The Association is changing its structure to make individuals responsible for specific projects and to make the core membership more politically and socially aware. HPA is also registering voters and working in conjunction with other AIM groups to organize people being displaced by the Oak Street extension.

Internal Education

AIM's "internal education" project has three parts: 1) a series of issues-oriented, general meetings, much like those held during the campaign. Every other Monday, these meetings will feature a speaker with special knowledge to inform AIM members and to stimulate a discussion which may lead to new AIM projects; 2) an intensive seminar, meeting once each week, which will involve serious study through readings and discussion on the economical and political structure of power in the United States today; 3) a research group of willing experts who agree in advance to give their time and knowledge whenever any action project requires detailed background information to carry on its activities.

Schedules for the first two elements of the internal education project will appear soon in the newsletter. Further information can be obtained by calling 777-8739.

-- Rick Wolff

Educational Coop.

Four Hill Parents and others interested have been meeting to discuss a new kind of school, rejecting the style and values of the New Haven public schools for a new human approach. The school will have full parent participation in all school matters including the classroom, to increase the teacher-student ratio and create a link between school and home. All students will be encouraged and expected to help plan the curricula, and to criticize and question what they feel is inadequate in the school. If respect and affection are given to students in this way through the learning experience, it is hoped they will come to respect themselves as mature people, proud of their humanity.

Applications for financial help are now being prepared for submission to foundations. Some sites have been inspected. The planning and work are open to anyone interested.

Conn. Political Reform

This project is presently coordinated by Bob Cook. Its goals are to change Connecticut's anti-democratic election laws, to remove the party lever, provide open primaries, reform voter registration procedures, eliminate patronage, give the vote to 18-year-olds, and provide public financing of political campaigns with strict limitations on the amount that can be spent.

The work to be done now is (1) analysis of current laws and how they can be changed, (2) creation of a political reform package, and (3) agitation and organization.

Urban Renewal

For work on this project, which is coordinated by Harris Stone, see the lead story in this issue.

Branford

AIM of Branford will meet on Tuesday, January 19, 1967, at 8 p.m. at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Glick, 16 Old Hickory Road. The meeting will receive reports from three committees which have been meeting for the past two months.

The first report will concern "What we can do about peace and foreign policy." A second report concerns local problems including water pollution and local application of state welfare. The third report is on the relationship of the Branford group to the larger AIM group in New Haven. All interested parties are urged to attend.

-- Shirley Hahn

Hamden

A general meeting of all Hamden people interested in AIM will be held January 27, at 8:30 p.m. at the home of Jack Crane, 230 Hill St. in Hamden. An agenda for the meeting was planned at an earlier meeting in December. Since the election there have also been two parties in Hamden, a thank-you party following the election, and a fund-raising dinner which cleared $125.

Yale IPAC

An organizational meeting for Yale IPAC is planned at the end of January as soon as exams are over. Projects to be discussed include speakers for the campus, political organizing in the first ward, use of a bulletin board in Yale Station, and fund-raising activities. The major activity of the organization since the campaign has been sponsoring the appearance of Stokeley Carmichael at Woolsey Hall in November.

Economic Conversion for peace

This committee, headed by Jack Crane of Hamden, has already printed up thousands of copies of a pamphlet "From Swords to Ploughshares" which discusses wartime industry in the United States and in the New Haven area and how we can plan for a peacetime economy. The committee is presently sending this pamphlet to all members of the state legislature and to those attending state regional planning sessions.

The committee is asking for a review of two bills relating to economic conversion which were passed in 1965 but which have not been put into effect by the Governor. They are also studying proposals for new laws and planning for a special seminar for industrial and commercial businessmen on reconversion to peace.

AIM members are urged to participate in this committee, which began as a project of the New Haven Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy.

Office Staff

The AIM office will keep going as long as the rent can be paid. The hunt for lower-rent quarters has so far not paid off. The present location is available through January thanks to an endowment for the monthly amount and an extension of the lease for one month.

Elizabeth Rose and Neal Grossman have been manning the office on a part-time basis, although Neal will be unavailable during exams in January. Elizabeth will be in the office on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 10 to 12. Joan Stone has been helping with the transition from campaign to permanent AIM headquarters. The major project at this time involves an overhaul of the original mainling list. A telephone tree has been set up to contact all those in the 3rd district who were on the old mailing list, asking them to subscribe to the newsletter.

The office will serve all AIM projects with its machines (mimeograph, addressograph, typewriter and stamp machine) and as a meeting place. Paper and mailing expenses must be met by the project concerned. Access to the office must be arranged through Elizabeth Rose, since the number of keys is limited.

Newsletter and Press

Several hundred people out of the 3200 who were receiving the newsletter during the campaign have now sent in subscriptions, but many more are needed. The printing of the newsletter was done during the campaign by John Mallery, but new arrangements must be made now. Don Chambers has been studying printing and it may be possible for the newsletter to buy a press for him to operate in New Haven. If you can help make this a worthwhile business venture, please contact Don at 776-4982.

East Rock Cont.

in still unexplained fashion, intersect with Whalley, Dixwell, Goffe, Howe, and Tower Parkway. Plans call for the conversion of Howe and Dwight Streets to high speed roadways to accomodate the new surge of traffic, but nobody has publicly announced the amount of widening that would be needed, or whether houses would be moved or destroyed. Howe and Dwight Streets would end in bridges over the sunken Oak Street connector and join at Howard Avenue in a boulevard to City Point. In any case, both the Dixwell and Dwight communities would be separated from downtown by a formidable expressway if current plans are carried out.

Fortunately, plans for the "loop" are not as far along as the plans for Route 34, but no groundswell of opposition has developed and the current situation is ominous. The Dixwell Redevelopment Agency, acting as a cover for the State Highway Department, has quietly started to acquire the needed property on Lake Place and Bristol Street, thereby removing potential opponents of the "loop" before plans for the road are brought to a public hearing. Mayor Lee's willingness to build the road underground through Yale campus (but not, it should be noted, anywhere else) has apparently neutralized potential opposition at Yale. What is now needed is a militant community action group,

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East Rock Cont.

modeled perhaps on the Save the Park Committee, to resist any and all property acquisition and to force public hearings. People living on Trumbull Street, Bristol Street, Lake Place, and the lower Dwight area should readily become involved, and many other people in the Dixwell, Dwight, and Yale communities should also prove to be interested. ORGANIZATION, NOW, is essential. The roadplanners are not yet sure how to surmount such formidable problems as interchanges, and they are having trouble justifying the enormous cost -- estimated at $15 million dollars by Mayor Lee, for less than one mile of highway! (By comparison the expensive Connecticut Turnpike cost only three million dollars per mile; while Martin Luther King's Chicago Freedom Movement plans to rehabilitate 500 substandard dwelling units with only $4 million dollars.)

What might these projects have to do with the future of AIM? It seems to me that issue-centered community projects -- in this case, opposing the "loop" -- represent a most useful sort of activity for our group. Through this sort of activity, we can arouse local constituencies to greater levels of political awareness and activity, and we can channel our concern about people's needs into constructive action. Furthermore, we can make friends with people who share our worries about indiscriminate highway building -- I am thinking especially of the powerful Save the Park Committee. It must be noted that they have not yet won a final victory against the East Rock Expressway. In fact, there are likely to be proposals in the upcoming State General Assembly to finance this controversial road. If we can help them, no doubt they can help us.

If interested in this project, call either Rev. James Smith, 777-1366, or the author, Dan Crofts, 776-2882.

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SPECIAL ISSUES TO COME: Medical Care, Welfare, Education, Urban Renewal

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